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ABSTRACT

This unit is designed for a second-year Spanish language class. The focus is on the Mayans and the 1994 Zapatista uprising in Chiapas (Mexico). The topics addressed include: (1) the Mayans' historical problems; (2) the 1994 rebellion in Chiapas; and (3) the reactions of the world and of the Mexican federal government to the rebellion. Suggestions are made for adaptation of the unit to a geography class. The unit uses a month of class time and contains Spanish language worksheets and additional reference materials. (EH)

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by Jari Taylor Walsh

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THE MAYANS IN CHIAPAS, MEXICO: PAST AND PRESENT

BY

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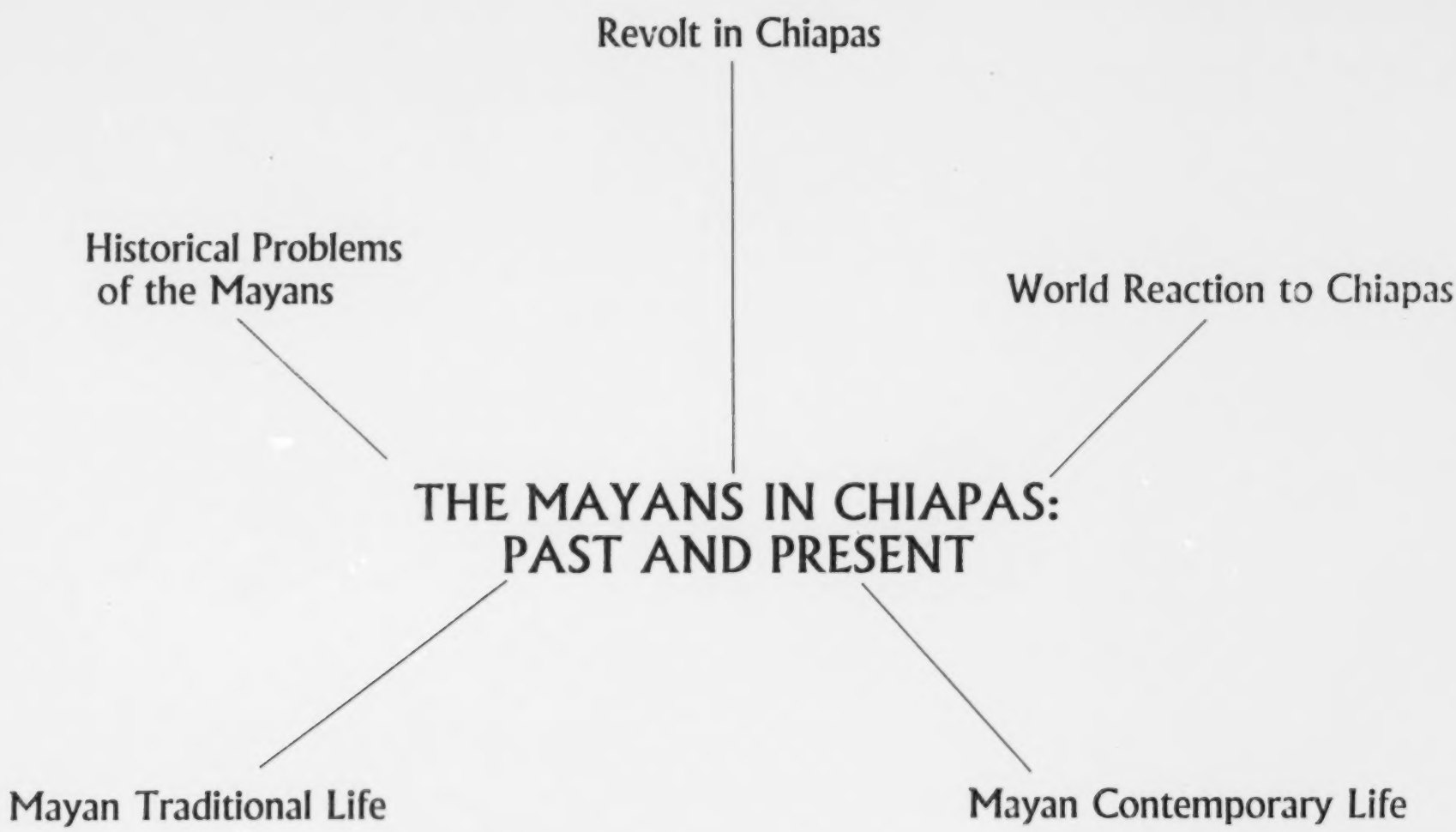
PROJECT

Submitted in fulfillment of the requirement for the
Fulbright-Hays 1996 Mexican Seminar
"Mexico: A Transition toward Democratic Reform
and Change in the 21st Century"


Revolt in Chiapas
Historical Problems of the Mayans
World Reaction to Chiapas
THE MAYANS IN CHIAPAS: PAST AND PRESENT
Mayan Traditional Life
Mayan Contemporary Life

Revolt in Chiapas

N.A.F.T.A. inaugurated 1/1/94.

E.Z.L.N. seize 4 small towns, declare war on the federal government, and insist on reform on a national level.

2/17/95 - P.R.I. appointed governor resigns after just 2 months. Government has unilateral ceasefire and limited amnesty for the Zaptistas. Dialogue to begin on land redistribution.

Historical Problems of the Mayans

Land seizure by Isidro Jimenez and militia in 1819.

1910-20 Revolution did not get the land back for the Mayans.

1970's - ranch expansion and oil exploration forced the Mayans off their milpas.

1980's - influx of Guatemalan refugees who worked more cheaply.

1994 - state government does not enforce land return to the Mayans after 18 years of litigation.

World Reaction to Chiapas

Investors panicked, dumped Mexican stocks and bonds.

Mexican government forced to spend about $20 billion of $28 billion reserve to bolster peso.

12/20/94 - government devalues peso.

2/27/95 - Bolsa falls to 28 month low. Inflation is 60%, interest rates are 80-100%.

1/31/95 - $50 billion international loan package brokered by President Clinton.

THE MAYANS IN CHIAPAS: PAST AND PRESENT

Mayan Traditional Life

Zinacanteco Mayans want to work their milpas, and to continue their traditional life. Social rank is based on ceremonial participation.

Daily Life.

Market day in San Cristobal.

Traditional health care.

Mayan Contemporary Life

In 1970's, many milperos joined federal government's development projects or commercial production.

Possibility of working as a caminero or truck-driver.

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H.S. Spanish 2: The Mayans in Chiapas, Mexico: Past and Present

Introduction:

As a participant in the Fulbright-Hays' Summer 1996 Seminar in Mexico, I visited the Late Classic Mayan ruins of Palenque, and San Cristóbal de las Casas in Chiapas, which was the first city that the Mayan Zapatistas occupied on Jan. 1, 1994, to start their rebellion against the government of President Carlos Salinas de Gotari and the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). I also traveled in a local micro-bus (actually a van whose sliding side door fell off when I tried to shut it) to the Mayan town center of Zinacantán, the ceremonial and political center for the large, indigenous Zinacantán area, which surrounds the Ladino (mestizo) city of San Cristóbal de las Casas. Thus in a matter of a few days, I was confronted with the Mayans' past, with their continuing traditional way of life in Zinacantán, and with their current political demands for democratic reform from the lowest levels of the society up, and for the separation of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) from being the actual government of Mexico.

I have used the information from my visit to Chiapas to broaden my unit that I developed this year on the Mayans and on the 1994 Zapatista uprising in Chiapas. I used nine articles from the Washington Post to highlight the conflict between Mayan traditional life and modern times. This conflict resulted in the Zapatista National Liberation Army's (EZLN) long-planned rebellion to demand agrarian and political reforms for all the indigenous Indian groups in Mexico. The articles provided me with three topics that I summarized, condensed and then wrote in high school level 2 Spanish. The three topics are: the Mayans' historical problems, the 1994 rebellion in Chiapas, and the reactions of the world and of the Mexican federal government to the rebellion.

In Chiapas, I learned that the indigenous Mayan people want to participate in how the federal government spends its money in Chiapas, and that they want the government to treat them with dignity and to respect their human rights. In 1994, the EZLN demanded political and democratic liberty and clean elections throughout Mexico and at all levels of government. The Mexican political analyst Jorge G. Castañeda writes in his study of the 1994 Mexican Presidential election year, Sorpresas te da la vida: México 1994, that unless the process of a transition towards democracy begins in Mexico on the federal level, there will not be a solution of the conflict between the Zapatistas and the State of Mexico.[1]

I emphasized to my students their need to understand the Mayans' traditional background and the EZLN's uprising. This uprising toppled the Mexican economy, and necessitated a $50. billion bailout loan by the International Monetary Fund brokered by President Clinton. I wanted my students to realize that we are a global village, and that the actions of one group of people may affect us all.

Although I spent one month of class time on this unit exclusively (we teach Spanish using the content-based method and not a textbook), a Spanish teacher following a traditional textbook could easily use my unit by starting with the National Geographic Society's 1995 video "The Lost Kingdoms of the Mayans" to show that the Mayans' traditional life has changed little over the centuries, and then use my Spanish text based on the Post's articles to discuss the impact of the Mayan rebellion on the Mexican economy. I also use a unit on the Zapotecs of Zinacantán, Chiapas, which I purchased from S.P.I.C.E. (Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education) for information on Mayan daily life. The S.P.I.C.E. unit is helpful but not necessary.

[1] Jorge G. Castañeda. Sorpresas que te da la vida: México 1994 (Mexico: Aguilar, 1994), p. 41.

TITLE OF UNIT: The Mayans in Chiapas, Mexico: Past and Present.

LEVEL: High School Spanish
SKILLS REQUIRED: Knowledge of the preterit tense.

PURPOSE: To show the largely unchanged past and present life of the Mayans in Chiapas, and the impact of their rebellion on the current Mexican economy and political scene.

LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS:

1) to review and to use the preterit tense.

2) to teach health expressions and dialogues to enable a student to visit a medical clinic and to seek help.

DAILY LESSON PLANS: for 50 minute classes, 4 days per week

Day 1: As an introduction, locate the state of Chiapas, its capitol Tuxtla Gutiérrez, San Cristóbal de las Casas, and the Mayan ruins Palenque on the colored overhead of the Mayan world in Mexico. Show the National Geographic Society's 1995 video "The Lost Kingdoms of the Mayans," available from most public libraries.

Day 2: Finish the "Lost Kingdoms" video. Read and discuss "Unearthing the Treasures of Copán," Illinois Quarterly, Jan./Feb., 1993, pp. 18-23.
This article details the anthropological explorations of Professor William L. Fash Jr. and his crew, who are featured in the National Geographic's video.

Note: The materials for Day 1 and 2 are in English. The rest of the unit is entirely in Spanish.

Day 3: Using the overhead transparencies and the slides, present the Late Classic Mayan city Palenque.

Commentary for the slides: Palenque: una ciudad situada cerca de la frontera oeste de las tierras bajas mayas. De 600 -800 años d. C., Palenque se convirtió en el centro dominante de la región, y extendió su control sobre una gran área por guerras y matrimonio.

Templo de las Inscripciones - construido en un cerro para ahorrar el trabajo de relleno Bajo el Templo, está la rica tumba real del gran gobernante Pacal, "Escudo Jaguar," quien nació en 603 d. C., ascendió al trono en 615 y murió en 684.

El Palacio - residencia de la familia real y de personas con elevados cargos religiosos y administrativos. La familia real vivía en varias galerías alrededor de los cuatro patios. Hay una torre de observación en uno de los patios.

Templo del Sol - ocupa el lado oeste de la plaza, está en un zócalo. El objeto de veneración es un escudo redondo con la cabeza del Dios Jaguar del Inframundo. Es una personficación del Sol cuando desaparece por la noche.

Templo XIV - Está a un lado del Templo del Sol. Hay tres cabezas fantásticas de Chac, el Dios de la Lluvia.

Templo de la Cruz - al norte de la Plaza del Sol.

Templo de la Cruz Foliada - está situado frente al Templo del Sol en la misma plaza

Templo del Conde - se desenterraron tres tumbas con vasijas de barro, cuentas y orejeras de jade, cuchillos de obsidiana, cuentas de concha, objetos de hueso y caracoles pequeños perforados.

el Grupo del Norte - tiene una plataforma larga con los restos de cinco edificios.

el acueducto - trae agua de manantial para el centro ceremonial y también evita las inundaciones.[2]

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[2] Nelly Gutiérrez Solana. Los Mayas: Historia, Arte y Cultura (Mexico: Panorama Editorial, 1995), pp. 111-18.

Day 4 - Begin the five lesson unit "Tradición y cambio en una comunidad indígena: los Zinacantecos de Chiapas, México," purchased from S.P.I.C.E. The unit highlights the Zinacanteco Mayans' very traditional life in Mexico today. Lesson One uses eight slides to introduce teenage Portillo and his family at their milpa (cornplot). *Note: The eight slides of Portillo's family alone justify the $15. price of this excellent teaching unit, because the town center of Zinacantán strictly enforces their rule of no photographs.* The traditional life of the milperos, the Mayan subsistence farmers, is contrasted to the modern camioneros, the young Mayan men who choose to become truck-drivers and enter the modern economy.

Day 5 - Lesson Two: daily life in Zinacantán. The welfare of the family depends on each person's daily contribution. We learn what each person in Portillo's family does to support and to contribute to the family income.

Day 6 - Lesson Three: a visit to the Ladino (Spanish-speaking) market in San Cristóbal de las Casas. The Zinacanteco Mayans spend a whole day traveling to and from the Ladino market in San Cristóbal to sell their beans, peaches and flowers for money to purchase what they cannot produce themselves, such as thread, cloth, a radio battery or a light bulb. They also weave and embroider beautiful textiles to sell for a secondary income.

Day 7 - Lesson Four: traditional vs. modern ways of life. The life of a milpero and his advancement to mayordomo (a religious elder held in high esteem by the community) in the traditional cargo system is contrasted to a young Zinacanteco choosing to enter the modern economy by working as a truck-driver in the produce markets and perhaps eventually making deliveries throughout Mexico.

Day 8 - Lesson Five - health in Zinacantán. Two possible treatments for the Mayans' medical problems - the traditional shaman or curandero and the medical intern or pasante are presented, with the advantages and disadvantages of treatment by each. Students conclude the class by planning dialogues in pairs between an ailing Mayan and a pasante at a clinic. The skits are videotaped for viewing by the students and for easier teacher evaluation.

Day 9 *- My slide show on the Zinacantán town center and on the religious cargos.* Although I was prohibited from taking pictures or slides of anyone or of anything in the Zinacantán town center, I was allowed to photograph in the private museum. There I shot slides of the clothing associated with eleven different cargos in the religious hierarchy organized around Catholic holy days and saints' days celebrations. I also furtively took slides of the outskirts of the town center when no one was looking. I was very careful to comply respectfully with the strict rules of Zinacantán. My presentation in Spanish follows.

Los Zinacantecos viven en parajes aislados, y van al centro religioso y político de Zinacantán los días del mercado y de las celebraciones religiosas. La agricultura es su actividad principal. Cultivan el maíz, los frijoles, los chiles y la calabaza. Las artesanías son su recurso secondario.

En Zinacantán, los miembros del cabildo gobiernan la región por consenso. Colectan el dinero para las obras públicas, nombran comités para las fiestas y reciben a los visitantes. Resuelven los pleitos entre los miembros de la comunidad.

La jeraquía religiosa está organizada alrededor de las celebraciones católicas y los días de los santos. En el sistema de los cargos, hay 61 puestos que el individuo puede escalar. Los cargos duran un año, mientras que el cargado tiene que vivir en el pueblo de Zinacantán y tiene que pagar los gastos por las ceremonias que son muy costosas. Pagan por las flores (usan muchas), las velas y el incenso (el copal). También emplean a los músicos, los danzantes y a los coheteros.[3]

Las diapositivas de los cargos:

1. Hay doce mayordomos religiosos. Es el cargo más alto dentro de la organización social del templo.

2. JCHIK'ROM - Incensadora, cargo para las ancianas o las viudas. Están encargadas de quemar incenso o cambiar las flores del altar. Danzan y llevan su huipil de lana.

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[3] Nelly Gutiérrez Solana. pp. 158-60.

3. El Vaquero - los dos mayordomos mayores solo en las fiestas de Navidad, el Año Nuevo y los Santos Reyes. Era traje de novio antes.

4. Angel - los mayordomos eligen a dos niños de otras familias para que se vistan de ángeles. Tendrán ocho a diez años, y su cargo es de tres años.

5. ME'CHUN - la esposa de vaquero. Los hombres se visten de mujer. Llevan los instrumentos de hilar para demostrar a las mujeres sus responsabilidades.

6. El Shaman - el curandero. Lleva el baston de poder, hecho de otate "bix" para detectar donde queda el alma del paciente. Consulta a su paciente por medio del pulso.

7. El Alferez - hay siete mayores y siete menores. Son el segundo nivel en el sistema de los cargos. Llevan su red con dos botellas, una llena de aguardiente.

8. El rojo - número uno en el sistema de los cargos.

9. El jaguar.

10. ME'EL JAP KANTELA - la portadora de velas. Hay ocho senoras que las llevan durante la Semana Santa. Generalmente son viudas, y se las consideran señoras sagradas.

11. CH'UL MOL - el anciano sagrado. Estos hombres llevan la cruz de Jesus Cristo durante la Semana Santa.

12. La novia - Su huipil fue inspirado en los antiguos huipiles aztecas. Las bodas durarían tres días.

En conclusión, la religión de los Zinacantecos combina creencias prehispánicas y católicas. Todavía honran a las deidades de la naturaleza y hacen rituales dirigidos por un shaman para controlar el tiempo y para curar a los enfermos. El elaborado sistema de los cargos para servir a la comunidad es una costumbre prehispánica y colonial.

Day 10: *The following classes are based on the Washington Post articles, which are listed under the Materials section of this project.*

1. Give the students Part I, "Los problemas históricos de los mayas," which describes Isidro Jiménez and his militia's seizure of Mayan lands in 1819 and the Mayans' ensuing efforts to regain their ancestral land.

2. a) Opening Activity - Preterit tense review. Write the following verbs the board from the text:

regular verbs: **llegar** **perder** **recibir**
ocupar **prometer**
responder

irregular verbs: **tener que**
obtener
haber (hubo)

Go over the verbs' meanings in Spanish. Have student volunteers write the preterit conjugation of each verb on the board. The class copies the definitions and the corrected verb conjugations into their individual class notebooks.

b. The class reads the handout, then we discuss it in Spanish so that they understand the text.

c. I have six envelopes, each filled with the handout cut into strips. In groups of four (my students sit at desks in groups of four), the students arrange the strips in chronological order. This is a comprehension check. The student groups then race to see which group can rearrange the strips correctly the fastest.

d. I pass out the preterit tense pair practices based on the text. Students do the practices in pairs, and correct each other's oral work. Each student then individually writes in the verb forms on his sheet for a grade.

Day 11: The students use my second handout, "La rebelión de los mayas en Chiapas."

1. Opening activity - I have yesterday's verbs (infinitive form) written on large, 5" x 8" file cards. I use the cards as flash cards to review the verbs' meanings with the class and to drill the preterit conjugations.

The students then write down the four new verbs for today, **capturar, ayudar, renunciar, y discutir**, their Spanish definitions and preterit conjugations in their notebooks.

I also briefly discuss these lexical items found in my text: **había ganado, había gobernado más de 65 años, y fue inaugurado.**

2. We read and discuus the text in Spanish.

3. The students do the second pair practice based on today's text.

4. I have the students begin to make timelines based on the handouts. They prepare the timelines in pairs on large sheets of Xerox paper taped together horizontally.

Day 12: I give the students my third handout "La reacción mundial a la crisis en Chiapas."

1. Opening activity - Students copy and practice conjugating the following verbs in the preterit tense:

apoyar	**poder**	**oir**
flotar	**vender**	
gastar		
llegar a ser		
prestar		

They also write down these new vocabulary words:

los inversionistas extranjeros
la Bolsa
desvalorizar

la razón de interés
los consumidores

2. We read and discuss the text in Spanish.

3. Students do the last set of pair practices.

4. Students finish their time lines.

Day 13: My goal is to have the students pull together all of the material from the entire Mayan unit, which they have now completed. To do this, they will plan a newscast program similar to the "Newshour with Jim Lehrer" on PBS.

In groups of four, the students brainstorm, prepare and write their newscast. They must cover material in short segments from these subject areas: the historical background of the Mayans, the current lifestyle of an indigenous Mayan family, and their political rebellion and its consequences. I expect each student to do a short presentation in his group of two to three minutes.

Day 14: Students finish their newscast reports. I proofread their scripts as they finish writing them, and then I have the students make their corrections. I also listen to each student reading his script to help with his pronunciation.

Day 15: Our final class day on the Mayan unit. We videotape each group's news program. The students will watch the video at the beginning of the next class.

LOS PROBLEMAS HISTORICOS DE LOS MAYAS

1. Los mayas tienen títulos de su tierra ancestral en Chiapas que datan a 1774.

2. En 1819, Isidro Jiménez y sus militares ocuparon la tierra de los mayas.

3. Aunque la Revolución Mexicana de 1910-1920 prometió " *Tierra para los que la labran!*", los mayas no recibieron su tierra de nuevo.

4. En los años 1970, hubo una expansión de los grandes ranchos y la exploración por petróleo.

   Muchos campesinos (**milperos**) perdieron sus milpas. Tuvieron que buscar empleo en las plantaciones de café, azúcar o plátanos.

5. En los años 1980, más de 80,000 gualtemaltecos llegaron a Chiapas para escaparse de la Guerra Civil.

   Los campesinos mayas perdieron su empleo porque los refugiados de Guatemala trabajaban por menos dinero.

6. En los años 1980, el gobierno federal de Mexico respondió a las demandas por las mayas para su tierra con más represión: amenazas, encarcelamiento y matanzas.

7. Después de dieciocho años de litigación en las cortes federales, los mayas obtuvieron el derecho a su tierra ancestral alrededor del municipio de Bachajón. Sin embargo, el gobierno de Chiapas no les dio su tierra.

LA REBELION DE LOS MAYAS EN CHIAPAS

1. **El primero de enero de 1994**, el día de la ratificación del **Tratado del Libre Comercio (N.A.F.T.A.).**

   El Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional capturó cuatro pueblos en la jungla de Lacandón, en el sur de Chiapas.

   En su "Declaración de la Selva Lacandona," los Zapatistas tenían once demandas básicas: "trabajo, tierra, techo, alimentación, salud, educación, independencia, libertad, democracia, justicia y paz."

   Los Zapatistas querían la redistribución de la tierra de los ranchos a los mayas, porque era su tierra ancestral. Iban a confiscar propriedades rurales "que excedan las 50 hectáreas en condiciones de mala calidad, y de 25 hectáreas en condiciones de buena calidad."

   También los Zapatistas querían la reforma democrática a un nivel nacional para ayudar a todos los grupos de indígenas en el país.

2. El primero de diciembre de 1994: el nuevo gobernador de Chiapas, Eduardo Robledo, fue inaugurado. Era miembro del **Partido Revolucionario Institucional (P.R.I.)**, el único partido que había gobernado Mexico hace más de sesenta y cinco anos.

3. El 12 de diciembre de 1994: el paro del fuego del gobierno federal contra los Zapatistas y una amnistía limitada para ellos. El gobierno va a discutir la redistribución de la tierra con los Zapatistas.

4. El catorce de febrero de 1995: para aplacar a los Zapatistas, el Gobernador Eduardo Robledo renunció a su posición. (Los Zapatistas creían que Robledo había ganado por fraude.) Julio César Ruiz, otro representante del P.R.I., fue inaugurado como gobernador.

LA REACCION MUNDIAL A LA CRISIS EN CHIAPAS

1. Los inversionistas extranjeros tuvieron miedo: vendieron sus bonos y abandonaron la Bolsa.

2. El gobierno federal del Presidente Ernesto Zedillo tuvo que gastar billiones de dólares (no pesos) en reserva para apoyar el peso.

   Entre 1994-1995, el gobierno gastó $10 billiones de su reserva de $27 billiones.

3. El 20 de diciembre de 1994: el gobierno no pudo gastar más dólares de su reserva para apoyar el peso. Fue necesario desvalorizar el peso por 13%.

4. El 22 de diciembre de 1994: La devalución del peso por 13% no era suficiente, porque el gobierno todavía tenía que gastar más billiones de dólares. La reserva de dólares cayó a 7 billiones. El gobierno tenía que permitir el peso a flotar. El peso cayó 40% en total.

5. El 31 de enero: el **Fondo Monetario Internacional** prestó a México $50 billiones para sacar el país del apuro.

6. El 27 de febrero de 1995: los problemas financieros de México continuaban. La Bolsa cayó al nivel más bajo en veintiocho meses.

   La inflación llegó a ser mas de 60% por ano; la razón de interés llegó a ser 80% -100% para los consumidores.

NOTE: To do the pair practice, divide the students into groups of twos. One student is ***Compañero A*** *and the other is* ***Compañero B****. Compañero A reads his sentences, one at a time, while Compañero B checks his answers. If Compañero A has difficulty with any item, Compañero B tutors him. They then switch papers so that Compañero B may do his sentences. Upon completion, the two switch papers again, and each student independently writes in the required transformations. I grade the completed papers. I also walk around the room during the pair practice to check on the students' oral work.*

PRACTICA EN PAREJAS - Los problemas históricos de los mayas.

Compañero A:

1. Isidro Jiménez _____ la tierra de los mayas.
   ocupar
2. Yo no _____ nada.
   prometer
3. Los mayas no _____ su tierra de nuevo.
   recibir
4. ¡Tú _____ tu milpa!
   perder
5. El gobierno federal _____ a los mayas con más represión.
   responder

Compañero B:

1. Muchos gualtemaltecos llegaron a Chiapas.
2. Los mayas perdieron su empleo.
3. Los mayas no recibieron mucha ayuda del estado de Chiapas.
4. La Revolución Mexicana prometió tierra a los campesinos.
5. Los mayas respondieron con más litigación.

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PRACTICA EN PAREJAS - Los problemas históricos de los mayas.

Compañero B:

1. Muchos gualtemaltecos _____ a Chiapas.
llegar

2. Los mayas _____ su empleo.
perder

3. Los mayas no _____ mucha ayuda del estado de Chiapas.
recibir

4. La Revolución Mexicana _____ tierra a los campesinos.
prometer

5. Los mayas _____ con más litigación.
responder

Compañero A:

1. Isidro Jiménez ocupó la tierra de los mayas.
2. Yo no prometí nada.
3. Los mayas no recibieron su tierra de nuevo.
4. ¡Tú perdiste tu milpa!
5. El gobierno federal respondió a los mayas con más represión.

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PRACTICA EN PAREJAS - La rebelión de los mayas en Chiapas.

Compañero A:

1. El Ejército Zapatista _____ cuatro pueblos.
   capturar
2. Los Zapatistas _____ a los indígenas.
   ayudar
3. El gobernador de Chiapas _____ que renunciar su posición.
   tener
4. Los Zapatistas _____ un paro de fuego.
   obtener
5. El gobierno les _____ a los Zapatistas una amnistía limitada.
   dar

Compañero B:

1. Uds. no obtuvieron su tierra de nuevo.
2. El gobierno federal tuvo que aplacar a los Zapatistas.
3. Julio César Ruíz, el segundo gobernador, ayudó a los mayas un poco.
4. Los Zapatistas dieron tierra a los mayas.
5. Los Zapatistas capturaron a algunos soldados.

PRACTICA EN PAREJAS - La rebelión de los mayas en Chiapas.

Compañero B:

1. Uds. no _____ su tierra de nuevo.
obtener

2. El gobierno federal _____ que aplacar a los Zapatistas.
tener

3. Julio César Ruíz, el segundo gobernador, _____ a los mayas un poco.
ayudar

4. Los Zapatistas _____ tierra a los mayas.
dar

5. Los Zapatistas _____ a algunos soldados.
capturar

Compañero A:

1. El Ejercito Zapatista capturó cuatro pueblos.
2. Los Zapatistas ayudaron a los indígenas.
3. El gobernador de Chiapas tuvo que renunciar su posición.
4. Los Zapatistas obtuvieron un paro de fuego.
5. El gobierno les dio a los Zapatistas una amnistía limitada.

PRACTICA EN PAREJAS - La reacción mundial a la crisis en Chiapas.

Compañero A:

1. El Fondo Monetario Internacional _____ $50. billiones a México.
   prestar
2. Los inversionistas extranjeros _____ sus bonos.
   vender
3. El gobierno mexicano no _____ el peso.
   defender
4. El peso _____ libremente.
   flotar
5. El peso _____ 40% en total.
   caer

Compañero B:

1. La Bolsa y los bonos cayeron.
2. Nosotros flotamos en el Golfo de México.
3. Los Zapatistas no pudieron reformar el gobierno federal.
4. El Congreso Norteamericano no prestó dinero a México.
5. Yo no vendí nada.

PRACTICA EN PAREJAS - La reacción mundial a la crisis en Chiapas.

Compañero B:

1. La Bolsa y los bonos _____ (caer)
2. Nosotros _____ (flotar) en el agua.
3. Los Zapatistas no _____ (poder) reformar al gobierno federal.
4. El Congreso Norteamericano no _____ (prestar) dinero a México.
5. Yo no _____ (vender) nada.

Compañero A:

1. El Fondo Monetario Internacional prestó $50. billiones a México.
2. Los inversionistas extranjeros vendieron sus bonos.
3. El gobierno mexicano no pudo defender el peso.
4. El peso flotó.
5. El peso cayó 40% en total.

CONCLUSION:

The official title of the 1996 Mexican Seminar was "Mexico: a Transition toward Democratic Reform and Change in the 21st Century." For that purpose, we traveled from north to south, to large cities and rural communities to listen to and interact with politicians, writers, public figures, school teachers, researchers, scientists, political scientists, anthropologists and many others. Each of the sixteen of us in the Seminar group had our own personal agenda and our own research project to develop as part of the Fulbright grant's conditions. Meanwhile we were to focus on the theme of Mexico moving towards a democracy by the next Presidential election in the year 2000.

I must admit that I am a middle and high school Spanish teacher, with a doctorate in medieval Spanish and French literature. I learned on this trip that I am definitely **not** a political scientist! My personal focus is raising my three teenage children and really being a creative language teacher using the content-based method. My life is seamless in that all three of my children go to school where I teach, and my youngest boy was in my Spanish class for the last two years. (He called me "Señora Mom"!)

The Seminar raised my political-consciousness. Beforehand I had naively accepted our country's definition of democracy as being the only possible kind of democratic system. In our country, we highly value an **individual's** rights, particularly the individual's right to vote in elections that we assume will be honest and fair (except if you grew up in Mayor Richard J. Daley's Chicago in the 1950's like I did). We also highly prize individual property rights. The Republican Convention of 1996 emphasized the "American Dream" of an individual being in the prosperous middle-class and owning his own home. (In Mexico, only 13% of the population own their own homes.)

In Mexico, I learned that the country is made up of a vast number of social groups, and it is the social **group** that one belongs to or is a part of that is really important. These social groups are community-based, whether in Mexico City or in the pueblo of Erongaricuaro in Michoacán. For the Mayans in Chiapas, their community identity and affiliation are all-important, for these Mayans are tied culturally and historically to their communal lands. In their opinion, current Constitutional reform puts their communities at risk: if the federal government granted them individual land rights, their

traditional community and their autonomy would disappear. Indeed, they have rejected the federal government's offers of this type of land reform.

So what is the possibility of Mexico moving towards a **democratic** reform implying a **change** in the current PRI dominated political system? I honestly do not know how Mexico will specifically make this change. I do know that the people from the indigenous Indian groups to the residents of Mexico City with never again accept the total dominance and economic corruption of the PRI. Already, the PAN (National Action Party) won 27% of the vote in the 1994 Presidential elections (up from 7.8 % in 1952), and now governs the states of Baja California, Guanajuato, Chihuahua and Jalisco. On the state level, PAN controls 30% of the country. The PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution) is strong in the states of Michoacán, Tabasco, Guerrero, and Chiapas. The only way that the PRI can now stay in power is to encourage the rise of the PAN and the PRD and of any other political group.

Besides the possibility of other political parties in Mexico as well as the PRI, I do not think that **democracy** in Mexico will ever become what it is in the United States, nor do I see this as necessary. Democracy in Mexico will have to be defined in terms of Mexico's own social and political reality. In a society where group consensus is a way of life, you will not see the rise of democratic elections as "competitions" between individuals, where someone wins and someone else looses. The Chiapan authority Duncan Earl told us that the Mayans consider democracy to be a terrible system, because one person wins and another looses. In a consensual society, there are no losers, only the choice by the group.

I believe that for "democracy" to become established in Mexico, somehow a means of a national consensus of all the indigenous groups and of everyone else will have to evolve. There will have to be some national forum to achieve this that will still respect the rights and the autonomy of each group. The Zapatistas rejected the federal government's electoral reform of the Constitution on July 17, 1996, because democracy "tiene que ver con una participación ciudadana y popular que se extiende a todos los ámbitos de la vida social, productiva, política y cultural de nuestro país."[4] Obviously,

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[4] María Teresa del Riego. "Rechaza el EZLN. por "insuficientes". las propuestas oficiales sobre democracia y justicia." Reforma. 17 July 1996.

vital sectors of the Mexican society are still being excluded from the democratic reform process. For democracy to succeed, a new relationship will have to be worked out between the politicians governing Mexico and those who are governed.

MATERIALS

1. National Geographic's 1995 video, "The Lost Kingdoms of the Mayas." (I borrowed a copy from the Arlington County Library's Video Dept.)

2. Shank, Alison McPhail. Tradición y cambio en una comunidad indígena: Los Zinacantecos de Chiapas, México. Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education (SPICE), 1993.

To order, contact: SPICE
Institute for International Studies (IIS)
Littlefield Center, Rm. 14, Stanford University, 300 Lasuen St.
Stanford, CA 94305-5013
Tel: (415)723-1114

3. Access to a video camera for filming and a video tape.

4. Large, 5x8" white index cards to use as flash cards for the vocabulary and the preterite verb tense reviews.

5. A class set of xeroxed copies of my three handouts based on the Post's nine articles, and of my three sets of pair practices that accompany the handouts.

6. **Bibliography**:

1. Castañeda, Jorge G. Sorpresas te da la vida: México, 1994. Mexico: Aguilar, 1994, pp. 37-62.

2. Gutiérrez Solana, Nelly. Los Mayas: Historia, Arte y Cultura. Mexico: Panorama Editorial, 1995.

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11.--------. "Salinas Threatens a Hunger Strike; Mexican Ex-President's Demands Ridiculed." Washington Post, 4 Mar. 1995, Sec. A, p. 17.

12.---------. "Elite's Role is Recurrent Issue in Mexican Crimes, Crises. Party Foundation Shaken." Washington Post, 12 Mar. 1995, Sec. A, p. 18.

13. Saboff, Jeremy A. Las ciudades de México Antiguo: reconstruyendo un mundo perdido. Trans. Lorena Monter. Mexico: Editorial Diana, 1995.

14. Smith, R. Jeffrey and Clay Chandler. "Peso Crisis Caught U.S. by Surprize." Washington Post, 13 Feb, 1995, Sec. A, p. 1.

15. "Unearthing the Treasures of Copán," Illinois Quarterly, Jan./Feb., 1993, pp.18-23.

ADDENDUM

Unfortunately, I clipped María Teresa del Riego's article without writing down the page number. I cut out the article only because I desperately needed to cut down on my baggage's weight! I am enclosing this copy of the article in its entirety.

Rechaza el EZLN, por "insuficientes", las propuestas oficiales sobre democracia y justicia

MARÍA TERESA DEL RIEGO
San Andrés Larráinzar, 17 de julio

Los representantes del Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN) afirmaron esta noche que en México no existe democracia ni justicia, y consideraron que los documentos sobre el tema propuestos por la delegación gubernamental resultan "muy insuficientes y superficiales como para constituir un aporte serio para sentar las bases de negociación".

En un comunicado emitido al concluir la primera fase de la plenaria resolutiva sobre democracia y justicia, la comandancia del EZLN sostuvo que la democracia es mucho más que procesos electorales transparentes: "tiene que ver con una participación ciudadana y popular que se extiende a todos los ámbitos de la vida social, productiva, política y cultural de nuestro país".

Al dar a conocer los elementos centrales de su propuesta sobre estos temas, la representación rebelde destacó que la democracia "desde abajo" es una necesidad para construir al país y exige una nueva relación entre gobernantes y gobernados.

Acerca de los planteamientos oficiales, el EZLN señaló que "evaden los problemas de fondo", como "la necesidad de un cambio de régimen y la separación del partido oficial y el Estado".

Previamente, se había notificado de una posición conjunta entre las delegaciones del EZLN y del gobierno federal, según la cual ambas partes coincidían en la necesidad de garantizar que la democracia y la justicia tengan plena vigencia para todos los mexicanos. ■